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Transmitted via Email

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MINNESOTA BULLETIN NO. 190-8-18

SUBJECT: NATIVE SEED SOURCE CRITERIA FOR STATE CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

Purpose. To inform field offices about seed source requirements for state cost share programs.

Expiration Date. September 30, 2008.

The Minnesota Legislature has recently enacted provisions dealing with the source of native seed allowed for use in state conservation programs including the RIM and the Buffer Cost-Share programs. Guidance has been provided to the Soil and Water Conservation Districts in the form of a fact sheet. This fact sheet is available at the following web site:

<http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us/grantscostshare/native-buffer.html>

It is available under the [Fact Sheet](#) (General Info about Native Buffer Cost-Share) tab. The basic information from the fact sheet is:

- Seed must originate from the same county as the project or the same Minnesota ecotype region as the project site. Cultivars are discouraged. Every attempt should be made to find local ecotype region seed.
- Provisions allow alternative seed sources to be utilized when it is determined that a project cannot go forward due to a lack of local ecotype region seed or unreasonable costs of procuring seed. When the provisions for an alternative seed source are met, the SWCD may approve seed from outside the local ecotype region according to the following steps:
 1. Neighboring ecotype region or county.
 2. All prairie eco-type regions in Minnesota.
 3. Prairie eco-type regions in neighboring states within 25 miles of a Minnesota boundary.
- The seed source shall be verified by the SWCD. Yellow tag certified seed through the Minnesota Crop Improvement Association (MCIA) is recommended to aid in the verification of source.

At this time the state law will not change any of the technical requirements in USDA programs, program payment schedules, and NRCS conservation practice standards. NRCS practice standards specify the minimum criteria to successfully establish and implement conservation. Likewise, USDA program payment schedules are determined using costs to implement the minimum practice standard criteria. This state law exceeds existing minimum practice standard criteria.



It is expected that individual conservation projects that utilize both USDA and state financial assistance funds could be impacted by this law.

Questions on this bulletin may be directed to Robin Martinek, Conservation Agronomist, at (651) 602-7866.

/s/

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